

Tuesday, 27 April 2021

(10.00 am)

MR FERNANDES: Good morning, everyone, and welcome to the second day of evidential hearings in Tranche 1, Phase 2 of the Undercover Policing Inquiry.

My name is Neil Fernandes and I am the hearings manager. For those of you in the virtual hearing room, please turn off both your camera and microphone, unless you are invited to speak by the Chairman, as Zoom will pick up on all noises and you will be on screen.

I now hand over to the Chairman, Sir John Mitting, to formally start proceedings.

Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. As at the beginning of every evidential session, a recording is going to be played. For those listening to it for the first time, please listen carefully.

I am conducting this Inquiry under a statute, the Inquiries Act 2005, which gives me the power to make orders regulating the conduct of the Inquiry, including its hearings. In the exercise of that power, I have made a number of orders which affect what you may and may not do in the hearing rooms and after you leave them. Breach of any of the orders is a serious matter and may have serious consequences for you.

1           If I am satisfied that a person may have breached an  
2 order, I have the power to certify the matter to  
3 the High Court, which will investigate and deal with it  
4 as if it had been a contempt of that court.

5           If satisfied that a breach has occurred and merits  
6 the imposition of a penalty, the High Court may impose  
7 a severe sanction on the person in breach, including  
8 a fine, imprisonment for up to two years and  
9 sequestration of their assets.

10          Evidence is going to be given live over screens in  
11 the hearing rooms. It is strictly prohibited to  
12 photograph or record what is shown on the screens, or to  
13 record what is said by a witness or anyone else in  
14 the hearing rooms. You may bring your mobile telephone  
15 into the hearing rooms, but you may not use it for any  
16 of those purposes. You may use it silently for any  
17 other purpose. In particular, you may transmit your  
18 account of what you have seen and heard in a hearing  
19 room to any other person, but only once at least  
20 ten minutes have elapsed since the event which you are  
21 describing took place.

22          This restriction has a purpose. In the course of  
23 the Inquiry, I have made orders prohibiting the public  
24 disclosure of information, for example, about  
25 the identity of a person, for a variety of reasons.

1           These orders must be upheld. It is inevitable that,  
2           whether by accident or design, information which I have  
3           ordered should not be publicly disclosed will sometimes  
4           be disclosed in a hearing. If and when that happens,  
5           I will immediately suspend the hearing and make an order  
6           prohibiting further disclosure of the information  
7           outside the hearing rooms. The consequence will be that  
8           no further disclosure of that information may be made by  
9           mobile telephone or other portable electronic device  
10          from within the hearing room, or by any means outside  
11          it.

12           I am sorry if you find this message alarming; it is  
13          not intended to be. Its purpose is simply to ensure  
14          that everyone knows the rules which must apply if I am  
15          to hear the evidence which I need to enable me to get to  
16          the truth about undercover policing. You, as members of  
17          the public, are entitled to hear the same public  
18          evidence as I will hear, and to reach your own  
19          conclusions about it. The Inquiry team will do their  
20          best to ensure that you can.

21           If you have any doubt about the terms of this  
22          message, or what you may or may not do, you should not  
23          hesitate to ask one of them, and with my help, if  
24          necessary, they will provide you with the answer.

25           Thank you. Do we have HN45 on screen?

1                   Is HN45 there?

2                               HN45 "Dave Robertson" (called)

3       THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, you were on mute momentarily.

4                   Could you confirm, please, that there is no one in  
5                   the room in which you are sitting, other than  
6                   the gentleman behind you with the mask?

7       A. Yes, I confirm that.

8       THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

9                   Do you want to be sworn or to affirm?

10      A. I will affirm.

11      THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Then I will ask that you are read  
12                   the necessary words by Mr Fernandes.

13                               (Witness affirmed)

14      THE CHAIRMAN: It must seem strange to be addressed always  
15                   as "HN45", but I'm afraid it's necessary.

16                   I know that because of your recent medical history  
17                   it is possible that you will need to have a break  
18                   earlier than the timed break that we're going to have at  
19                   11.15. If you do need it, please say so.

20                   Ms Wilkinson.

21                               Questions by MS WILKINSON

22      MS WILKINSON: Thank you, Sir.

23                   HN45, as the Chairman has just explained, I shall be  
24                   asking you some questions, and if at any point you don't  
25                   understand something I've said, or you want something

1 repeated, or you need a break, please just raise that  
2 matter and it will be dealt with.

3 I don't seem to be on the full screen. Is the audio  
4 working sufficiently? Can you hear me?

5 A. Yes, I can.

6 Q. As the Chairman also referenced, we shall be referencing  
7 your name as "HN45", and that's a cipher that has been  
8 adopted to protect your real identity, your cover name  
9 having been that of "Dave Robertson" that was used  
10 whilst you were deployed undercover many years ago; is  
11 that right?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. We'll be using other ciphers, other numbers, in relation  
14 to other of your colleagues at the time, and if you need  
15 to check who they were, I know that you've got a key  
16 next to you, and that's the document by your side, so  
17 please refer to that if you need to check who I am  
18 talking about.

19 A. (inaudible).

20 Q. Thank you.

21 Now, you made a statement for the Inquiry, dated  
22 30 August 2019, in which you answered, to the best of  
23 your ability, questions that had been posed. Is that  
24 true to the best of your knowledge and belief?

25 A. It is.

1 Q. Your cover name, "Dave Robertson", was not based on  
2 the identity of a deceased child, which is a practice we  
3 heard about in later years within the SDS. Why did you  
4 not use that method of establishing a false identity?

5 A. I just didn't. I wanted to use something that I would  
6 respond to -- appropriate.

7 Q. Were you aware of any other colleagues at the time using  
8 a different methodology and using the identity of  
9 deceased children?

10 A. No, I don't know how any of the others did this.

11 Q. You were deployed undercover with the SDS between  
12 October 1970 until there was an incident where you were  
13 compromised, and we'll deal with that, in 1973.

14 Your time in the field overlapped with a number of  
15 other officers, including ones that we've already heard  
16 about in evidence.

17 Do you recall an officer whose cipher was HN348 who  
18 used the cover name -- first name, "Sandra"? Do you  
19 recall her?

20 A. I do.

21 Q. And do you also recall another of your colleagues,  
22 Jill Mosdell?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. And we'll see when we look at some of the reports,  
25 sometimes your name appears on reports with either one

1 of those names; do you recall that?

2 A. Well, I recall maybe Jill Mosdell. I don't recall  
3 "Sandra's" name appearing.

4 Q. May we have a look at one of those reports, actually,  
5 just to see the style; and I can ask a couple of  
6 questions about how these came to be created. Could we  
7 pull up on the screen report {UCPI/10254}, please.

8 We see there -- are you able to see that  
9 sufficiently, HN45, from where you are? It may be, if  
10 you need to, you could move the chair closer to  
11 the screen to see a bit more easily, with the assistance  
12 of the gentleman with you?

13 A. Yes, that would be easier.

14 Q. Or the computer, whichever way round it needs to go.

15 Thank you.

16 A. That's a bit better.

17 Q. Is that better? Excellent. We might be able to hear  
18 you a little bit more clearly as well.

19 So this was a report about the BVSF. This is  
20 the Britain-Vietnam Solidarity Front. And it's dated  
21 October 1970, we can see in the top right. And can we  
22 see at the bottom right, your cipher has been imposed  
23 over the top of what would have been your real name?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. And we see that this was about a meeting at a pub in

1 King's Cross. It references, halfway down:

2 "There was no chairman and the only speaker was  
3 Al Manchanda, who spoke on the subject of 'Soviet  
4 revisionism and collusion with US Imperialists'."

5 And then you conclude with referencing:

6 "No mention was made of any future activities."

7 And the report lists a number of names of people  
8 that were present: Al Manchanda, Diane Langford and  
9 Sonia Seedo are those that we can see on the page there.

10 And we see that it's submitted, and there's a typed  
11 name there -- is that Saunders, chief inspector?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Would that have been Phil Saunders?

14 A. Saunders, yes.

15 Q. And we see a stamp on the left-hand side that  
16 says "Box 500"?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Just help us, did you as undercover officers type these  
19 documents up, or was somebody else typing them up?

20 A. No, they were typed up elsewhere.

21 Q. So how does the intelligence or the information you've  
22 collected get to a typist?

23 A. It -- it was written out in rough, and when there were  
24 these meetings during the week, the rough reports were  
25 taken away and typed up.



- 1 Q. And did you get to see them again after they'd been  
2 typed up?
- 3 A. I can't really recall that. Some may have been --
- 4 Q. -- (overspeaking) -- presumably where there's  
5 a signature, we can assume that the signature's been  
6 applied after the typing? So, for example, Saunders'  
7 signature here would have been written presumably after  
8 it had been typed up?
- 9 A. Well, it would have been typed up, yes, and he would  
10 have seen it after it was all typed.
- 11 Q. And when you were handwriting it out before it got to  
12 the typist, did it look effectively like this, did it  
13 include the information that we see in that middle  
14 paragraph and the names of the people that you recall  
15 being there?
- 16 A. Of course, yes.
- 17 Q. Did you have the reference numbers to hand? We see in  
18 the left-hand column it says "reference to papers" and  
19 the number's been slightly obliterated by a hole punch,  
20 but can you see the "/70/164"?
- 21 A. Well, I can't remember that, but I doubt it very much,  
22 because every different thing had a different reference  
23 number, and I certainly wouldn't have remembered.
- 24 Q. So is that the sort of detail that might have been added  
25 on by the typist in the back office?

- 1 A. It would have been done, yes.
- 2 Q. So -- but the reference in the text of what is reported  
3 back about the meeting would have come from you and  
4 would have appeared in your handwritten version before  
5 it gets typed up?
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. Thank you.
- 8 You joined -- you were working in Special Branch in  
9 the 1960s before moving to the SDS; is that right?
- 10 A. I can't remember the year I joined Special Branch, but  
11 it was --
- 12 Q. Don't worry about the specific date, but you'd been  
13 working in Special Branch before you joined the SDS; is  
14 that right?
- 15 A. Yes, yes.
- 16 Q. And were you asked by a lady called Helen Crampton? You  
17 can take the report down now, thank you.
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. Were you asked by a lady called Helen Crampton if you  
20 might like to join the SDS?
- 21 A. Yes, I was.
- 22 Q. Do you know how come -- how she had come to select you  
23 or approach you?
- 24 A. I have no idea.
- 25 Q. And what did you know of this organisation or this unit

- 1           before she mentioned it to you?
- 2       A. Well, not a great deal, but Special Branch was quite  
3           a small-knit community and people knew what might have  
4           been happening or not happening, although the detail  
5           wasn't available.
- 6       Q. So there was an understanding that this unit did exist  
7           amongst those in Special Branch?
- 8       A. Yes.
- 9       Q. And did people know what the unit did?
- 10      A. No, no. Not to -- no, not really.
- 11      Q. Did people know who was in it?
- 12      A. I -- I -- up to a point, yes. There was a lot of --  
13           a lot of movement, people coming and going; and at that  
14           time, Special Branch was -- the whole of Special Branch  
15           was quite a small-knit community, and everybody knew, to  
16           some degree, what was happening.
- 17      Q. Do you know the sorts of numbers that would have been in  
18           Special Branch back then?
- 19      A. No.
- 20      Q. And in the SDS, would you say the numbers ranged between  
21           10 and 12, something like that; those sorts of small  
22           numbers?
- 23      A. Well, I can't really recall that to any -- I can't be  
24           specific.
- 25      Q. Is it more like that sort of number, or closer to 30/40

1 in the SDS?

2 A. Again, I don't know, because the whole thing was fluid;  
3 people were coming and going all the time. And I think  
4 there must have been a variance in the numbers of people  
5 that were in there.

6 Q. Right.

7 When you were told about the unit and approached by  
8 Helen Crampton, what did she explain the role would be?

9 A. I can't really recall what she said to me. It was  
10 a long time ago now.

11 Q. Did you know that you were expected to work as an  
12 undercover officer?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. And it was with that knowledge that you agreed to join  
15 the unit?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Were you told what you would be gathering information  
18 for, what the purpose of the unit was, when you were  
19 joining?

20 A. Well, I was kind of aware of that.

21 Q. What was it?

22 A. Well, it was to provide -- the basis of that unit goes  
23 back to the first riots that there were in  
24 Grosvenor Square, when the Metropolitan Police were  
25 lacking when the serious demonstration went wrong and

1 outside the American Embassy, they got into the park and  
2 created mayhem, and the police were unable to deal  
3 with it. And they were unable to deal with it at the  
4 time because they didn't have sufficient intelligence as  
5 to the groups. And I can remember -- I was uniform on  
6 that day, and I can remember seeing those people coming  
7 up -- I think it was South Audley Street, with great big  
8 metal scaffolding poles that they had taken from  
9 a building site, chanting "Ho Ho, Ho Chi Min" as they  
10 ran up and just scattered the police line outside  
11 the American Embassy in Grosvenor Square.

12 Q. So that was the inception for the SDS, as you understood  
13 it?

14 A. That's as I understood it.

15 Q. So when you joined, which would have been around about  
16 1970, so it was a couple of years on from then, what did  
17 you understand the intelligence was being gathered for  
18 at that point?

19 A. It was just to assist the Metropolitan Police respond in  
20 a way that was appropriate for the policing needs.

21 Q. I think in your statement you said: {MPS/741095/22}

22 "In the early days, we were just trying to  
23 counteract people on the streets. Later on,  
24 the intelligence was used not just to help with  
25 the police response, but to find out about different

1 people's involvement and who was manipulating who."

2 So did it develop? Did the purpose, as you  
3 understood it, of the SDS develop?

4 A. I suppose it did, yes. I don't recall that  
5 particularly.

6 Q. Those within the unit, were you told to keep it secret  
7 from others within Special Branch and members of your  
8 family and friends?

9 A. Special Branch was a secret organisation anyway, and  
10 everybody in Special Branch was positively vetted,  
11 you know. So, by definition, it was a secret department  
12 really.

13 Q. And so does that mean that you could speak about the SDS  
14 more widely in Special Branch without any difficulty?

15 A. Well, you wouldn't really talk about specifics at all.

16 Q. Was there any particular status that people within  
17 the SDS held? Were they held within high regard amongst  
18 Special Branch?

19 A. Oh, I don't know. I don't think so.

20 Q. How did the work differ from the Special Branch work  
21 that you'd been doing once you joined the SDS?

22 A. Well, in the SDS, the work was much more targeted. When  
23 I was on a normal squad dealing with various  
24 wide-ranging things, you know?

25 Q. Forgive me, let me understand. You had been in

1           the Special Branch dealing with various things, and in  
2           the SDS it became more targeted?

3       A.   Yes.

4       Q.   Had you worked undercover at all when you were in  
5           Special Branch?

6       A.   Prior to the SDS, no.

7       Q.   No.  So that was quite a change for you, was it?

8       A.   Yes.

9       Q.   Before being deployed into the field, did you have any  
10          training or given some advice and tips?

11      A.   Well, I can't remember, but I can -- I think we went  
12          into the office for a while.

13      Q.   Into the office.  Does that mean the back office?

14      A.   The back office, yes.

15      Q.   Where was that based?

16      A.   I can't really -- there was one down at the back of --  
17          oh, I can't remember the police station.  It was an old  
18          police house.

19      Q.   Affiliated to a police station?

20      A.   Yes, at the back of a police station.

21      Q.   And was that where, for example, the typists would  
22          operate and any administration required would take  
23          place?

24      A.   Yes.

25      Q.   And that was a different location from any safe houses

- 1           where you would then meet once you were in the field?
- 2       A.   Completely, yes.  That was like the headquarters where  
3           all the admin was run from, but it was totally away and  
4           divorced from the other safe houses.
- 5       Q.   Do you recall how long you were posted into  
6           the back office for -- (overspeaking) --
- 7       A.   No, I don't recall.
- 8       Q.   Would it have been a couple of days, or more like a few  
9           months, do you think?
- 10      A.   Well, it was more than days, but it may not have been  
11           months.  But most of the people who went into that job,  
12           they weren't -- they weren't lacking in initiative and  
13           discretion, they just got on with the job and picked it  
14           up very quickly.
- 15      Q.   Did you speak to them about how to use your initiative  
16           and how to pick it up quickly before you deployed?
- 17      A.   I don't recall.  I can't recall the specifics, but it  
18           was just picked up as you went along.  It wasn't  
19           difficult.
- 20      Q.   All right.
- 21                 Did you know that the intelligence that you were  
22           going to pick up and gather, obviously first of all you  
23           understood it was to help with the police response, so  
24           you were passing it back to your managers within  
25           Special Branch; is that right?



1 A. Yes.  
2 Q. Did you come to learn -- and I think in your witness  
3 statement you said -- this is paragraph 73  
4 {MPS/741095/19} -- we don't need to turn it up, but you  
5 said:

6 "I am sure that much of my reporting was copied to  
7 the security service ..."

8 What made you sure about that?

9 A. Well, it would be a stamp on the side, wouldn't it?

10 Q. The Box 500 stamp that we just saw on that document?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Okay. Does that suggest, then, that you did  
13 occasionally see the documents once they'd been typed  
14 up?

15 A. It varied, yes. I mean, if you weren't there, if you  
16 were on leave, it would just be signed by somebody else  
17 on your behalf and ... can't be too specific about it.

18 Q. No. But does it accord with your recollection that  
19 the general practice was you would write out the report,  
20 it would then come back to you in a typed-up version  
21 with references --

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. -- and you would sign it?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Thank you.

1           Can I just deal with one specific example of  
2           Box 500's involvement in that sense. Could we please  
3           pull up on screen {MPS/739241}.

4           I'll give the tab number. This is tab 26, Sir.

5           This does have a very clear reference to Box 500 and  
6           your cipher at the bottom right-hand corner. This is  
7           a reference to the fact that a letter had been written  
8           from Box 500 in January 1972, 14 January, asking for  
9           details regarding the employment particulars of -- and  
10          the name's been redacted out there -- of a particular  
11          person. And by 10 March 1972, information is being  
12          reported back, and that was that:

13           "[privacy] is employed as a [privacy] and obtains  
14           her work through the [privacy]. As such she does not  
15           stay in a particular employment for any length of time."

16          And that's got your cipher on it and HN294's signed  
17          it off there, and there's a reference on the side,  
18          presumably of the person's name on the "Subject" column.

19          Do you recall being tasked specifying to get  
20          information at the behest of Box 500?

21         A. Well, I -- Special Branch did that anyway, in or out of  
22          the SDS.

23         Q. Special Branch got information at the behest of  
24          the Security Service?

25         A. It's obviously pretty routine. I mean, I can't even

1 tell what that is.

2 Q. No, I can understand that you won't know the person in  
3 particular, but it's an example there of a very direct  
4 request for information from the Security Service that  
5 is fed back within a matter of months to them in answer  
6 to the query.

7 Did you understand -- were you given any specifics  
8 about when a request had come in from them specifically,  
9 or did you just understand everything went back to them?

10 A. I -- I really didn't take much -- much notice. I just  
11 did what I was asked to do. And, I mean, I must have  
12 been tasked through their letter to do that, and I just  
13 did it, and I can't remember.

14 Q. So it wouldn't have come as a surprise to you then to be  
15 seeing that report after the typist had typed it up that  
16 it was a specific request from Box 500?

17 A. No, not at all.

18 Q. Thank you.

19 Please take that report down now. Thank you.

20 How long did you expect to be deployed as an  
21 undercover officer when you joined?

22 A. I don't think there was any time limit on it. I think  
23 it probably was governed by how well you were doing or  
24 not doing on -- in my case, it came to an abrupt end  
25 very quickly.

1 Q. We'd understood that there was a -- we've seen  
2 documentation referencing 12 months was quite a good  
3 estimate of time for a deployment. But by the time you  
4 were deployed, was it the understanding that you'd be in  
5 the field for quite a lot longer than 12 months?

6 A. I -- I don't really know. I can't -- I can't recall any  
7 specifics like that.

8 Q. Certainly, but -- if you were -- you were certainly in  
9 the field by late 1970, and it's not until 1973 that  
10 your deployment ended. Was that a surprise to you then  
11 that you were still working as an undercover officer?

12 A. I wasn't out in the field for three years.

13 Q. You weren't?

14 A. No. I couldn't have been.

15 Q. Right. Well, we'll look at some of the reporting, but  
16 it certainly starts late 1970 and ends early 1973, so  
17 that would take -- it would be certainly covering  
18 a couple of years and longer?

19 A. I -- I can't recall that length of time, to be honest.  
20 I really can't.

21 Q. The pattern -- perhaps then just to help us with  
22 the pattern: were you working in this field every day,  
23 day in and day out, or were you sometimes working  
24 undercover and doing other things as well, maintaining  
25 your domestic life?

1 A. No, you didn't -- you didn't mix these things, you know?

2 Q. So when you were deployed, it was all week undercover?

3 Help us, then, with your meetings, and just a sense  
4 of how you would stay in touch with people and feed back  
5 the intelligence.

6 You were deployed in the field in a cover identity,  
7 and you said that you would meet -- the regular meetings  
8 I think was where you had said you handed in your  
9 handwritten notes, and then the typist would come back  
10 with versions for you to look at later?

11 A. I think that's the way it worked, yes.

12 Q. Where did these meetings take place?

13 A. Well, there were these safe houses all over the place.  
14 And they changed quite regularly for different kinds of  
15 reasons. And, I mean, I certainly can remember at least  
16 three or four different ones.

17 (10.30 am)

18 (A short break).

19 (10.50 am)

20 MR FERNANDES: Welcome back, everyone and thank you for your  
21 patience. I will now hand over to the Chairman to  
22 continue proceedings.

23 Chairman.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

25 As it happens, this is the first time something has

1           happened which requires a restriction order to be made  
2           in the middle of a hearing. I have made a restriction  
3           order in respect of something that was said by HN45  
4           between 10.29 and 10.31. It is more precisely described  
5           in the notice which will be posted in the hearing room.  
6           What I said in the recording applies. That information  
7           may not be broadcast by any means outside the hearing  
8           room, and may not be repeated by anyone in the hearing  
9           room to anyone outside it afterwards. The consequences  
10          of doing so are those that I set out in the recording.

11                 HN45, I'm sorry about the interruption. This was  
12           bound to happen at some stage, and you, I'm afraid, are  
13           the guinea pig for our procedures.

14                 Ms Wilkinson.

15   MS WILKINSON: Thank you, Sir.

16                 HN45, I'm just going to ask you about safe house  
17           meetings again. I'm going to repeat some of  
18           the evidence, because we need to make sure that  
19           the transcript reflects some of the evidence that you  
20           gave back then.

21                 Safe house meetings: I think you were saying there  
22           were the diary days, when everybody would claim their  
23           expenses; and that on those occasions, you and all your  
24           colleagues would attend at the safe house meeting, but  
25           then there were other days when just different ones of

1           you would attend. So there were sometimes more than one  
2           in a week; is that right?

3           A. Yes, that's correct.

4           Q. And you were explaining, I think, that nobody ever  
5           missed a diary day because of the expenses.

6                     So was it the case that you had to pay out money out  
7           of your own pocket for things -- for expenses that had  
8           been incurred, and then you could claim them back again?

9           A. Yes, up to a point. Sometimes people were given --  
10           I mean, sometimes people were actually given money, hard  
11           cash, to sort of pay for your rent, you know, because  
12           many people had these, for want of a better word, a duff  
13           flat or a room or something; I had one myself. And  
14           the landlady would only take cash. But we're talking  
15           about £4-a-week rooms.

16           Q. So would it be on those diary days when the expenses  
17           were done that you'd be given the hard cash by whichever  
18           of your managers were in attendance?

19           A. Yes, because the finance department of  
20           the Metropolitan Police gave the managers or the people  
21           at headquarters cash and -- and it was accounted for  
22           through them so that they could be given the money to  
23           pay the rent, and that sort of thing.

24           Q. And these meetings took place in the safe houses. Do  
25           you ever remember them taking place at cover addresses?

1           You talked about having a duff address yourself, and  
2           I think there's some evidence from one of your  
3           colleagues whose cover name was "Alex Sloan" that he  
4           recalled perhaps attending your cover address for one of  
5           these safe house meetings.  Might that have happened?

6           A.  I don't recall that.

7           Q.  Your -- the meetings where you would attend on the diary  
8           days, would they last a few hours?

9           A.  Yes.  It just -- just would depend on what's to be done  
10          and how it was -- what was needed.  It was -- the whole  
11          thing was very fluid.  It was just the whole thing was  
12          done until the job was done; and if it needed longer, it  
13          took longer, and if it didn't, it didn't.

14          Q.  And were you in regular contact over the phone with your  
15          managers or the back office in addition to these  
16          meetings?

17          A.  Yes --

18          Q.  So if there was something you needed to pass back, you  
19          could pass it back to your managers?

20          A.  Yes.

21          Q.  Did you have the home telephone numbers of your  
22          managers, or were you only ever in contact with  
23          the back office?

24          A.  No, I didn't have any personal phone numbers.  In fact,  
25          we didn't have mobile phones in those days.



- 1 Q. Would you just use a telephone box?
- 2 A. Yes.
- 3 Q. Presumably -- and I think you reference this in your  
4 statement. You said you were a close-knit group.  
5 You've talked about it being quite a small unit:  
6 {MPS/741095/11}
- 7 "... [it was] a close knit group and we trusted each  
8 other. We would have had general conversations about  
9 what we were up to during our deployments."
- 10 Does that sound right?
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. And so when you all got together and you were sitting  
13 around in your safe house, were you chatting about  
14 things that had gone well and things that had been a bit  
15 nerve wracking for you, and sharing that sort of  
16 experience amongst your colleagues?
- 17 A. Pretty well, yes.
- 18 Q. If we try and picture it, you're constantly deployed in  
19 this false identity, as are all your colleagues. When  
20 you get to sit in a room together, you must feel  
21 relieved, and you're able to drop your guard a bit and  
22 chat about things a little bit more openly, and release  
23 a little bit of the frustrations, presumably?
- 24 A. No, not necessarily. Special Branch officers are  
25 renowned as "zip mouths".

- 1 Q. Zip mouths?
- 2 A. Yes.
- 3 Q. Is that a phrase that you were all known as?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. And so what were the sorts of things that you would talk  
6 about in terms of your deployments and sharing  
7 information?
- 8 A. I really don't know. Just anything and everything  
9 really.
- 10 Q. If you'd come -- if there had been a close shave, might  
11 you have said to your colleagues, "You won't believe  
12 what happened the other day"?
- 13 A. Probably.
- 14 Q. And if somebody had been tested in another way, perhaps  
15 if there had been some suggestion of somebody trying to  
16 make a move on somebody, or some sort of intimacy being  
17 suggested, might that have come up?
- 18 A. I don't quite understand that.
- 19 Q. If somebody had -- if there was a suggestion that  
20 somebody was under pressure to begin a relationship, or  
21 somebody had made a sexual advance to one of your  
22 colleagues, might they have said, "Oh, you'll never  
23 guess what happened the other day"?
- 24 A. I didn't come across that.
- 25 Q. You were deployed with I think a number of colleagues at

1 the time in the field. We've discussed the name  
2 Jill Mosdell?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And we've discussed HN348 was deployed in the field  
5 during the currency of your deployment. Her first name  
6 was "Sandra"?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. There was also, for example, 347. His cover name was  
9 "Alex Sloan". Do you recall him? Yes? 347.

10 A. Oh yes, yes.

11 Q. Do you recall him?

12 A. I remember him, yes.

13 Q. And also, for example, in the field -- and I'll give you  
14 the real name, because he's known by his real name, Mike  
15 Ferguson was an undercover officer who was deployed,  
16 I think overlapped with you for a little period; do you  
17 recall him?

18 (10.58 am)

19 (A short break)

20 (11.05 am)

21 MR FERNANDES: Welcome back, everyone, and thank you for  
22 your patience. I will now hand over to the Chairman to  
23 continue proceedings.

24 Chairman.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

1           On this occasion, no restriction order will be made.  
2           What you said, HN45, was not in the least bit out of  
3           order, and the objection to it which came from  
4           the CL team should not have been made.

5           We'll continue as normal.

6           A. Thank you.

7           MS WILKINSON: HN45, we were there talking about safe house  
8           meetings, and this is the last aspect I wanted to deal  
9           with on this topic. We talked about some of your  
10          colleagues at the time, and we were asking about  
11          a specific colleague who we're referring to by use of  
12          his real name, Mike Ferguson.

13          Now, at that time, he was deployed into a group and  
14          reporting on a gentleman called Peter Hain, who was  
15          involved in quite a high profile campaign, wasn't he, to  
16          do with the Stop the Seventy Tour, and must have been  
17          within your colleague's knowledge that there had been  
18          a number of rugby fixtures influenced and cricket  
19          matches influenced at the time? Did you discuss what he  
20          was learning about on the ground during your safe house  
21          meetings?

22          A. I can say never.

23          Q. Never? Never raised the Stop the Seventy Tour at all or  
24          anything to do with the cricket matches?

25          A. Not to my knowledge.

1 Q. Your cover identity, as we've heard, was  
2 "Dave Robertson", and you had come up with a cover story  
3 that you were from Scotland and worked as a driver for  
4 a garage; is that right?

5 A. That's right, yes.

6 Q. I think you went to the steps of visiting the garage  
7 regularly, even though you hadn't actually revealed to  
8 anyone that you were deployed with where that garage  
9 was?

10 A. That's correct, yes.

11 Q. Why did you need to go to the garage regularly?

12 A. Just to find out for myself that nobody had been round  
13 there asking, because I -- the person who ran that  
14 garage was a personal friend of mine --

15 Q. And just moving on to your cover address, you had taken  
16 a cover address -- I think you called it a "duff flat",  
17 was the phrase that you all used at the time?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. And we know the specifics of that one, because you had  
20 to write it on a document that you handed in when you  
21 were attending a study class, and that was flat 15 at  
22 287 West End Lane?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Do you recall that?

25 And I think you used to say that before or after

1 attending one of the meetings of the group that you were  
2 infiltrating, you would go to your cover address?

3 A. That's correct, yes.

4 Q. Had you been advised to do that?

5 A. No.

6 Q. To take that step?

7 Where did you pick that idea up from?

8 A. From myself.

9 Q. Is this an example of the initiative you were  
10 referring to earlier?

11 A. Initiative and discretion.

12 Q. And did you know whether your colleagues used to do that  
13 or not?

14 A. I don't know what they did.

15 Q. I think you said as well at the time you were single,  
16 and so you were able to stay overnight in different  
17 flats as required. Were you ever tasked to stay in  
18 other SDS cover accommodation?

19 A. Yes, I was, because, being single, they sometimes wanted  
20 somebody to be there because of the stuff that was in  
21 there and security.

22 Q. Would that have been the safe houses you were  
23 referring to?

24 A. Yes, yeah.

25 Q. Did you change your appearance to grow a moustache and

- 1 change your hair?
- 2 A. Yeah -- well, I grew long hair, yes.
- 3 Q. But you didn't have any documents to support your cover  
4 identity, you didn't have a driving licence or anything?
- 5 A. Absolutely nothing.
- 6 Q. Others of your colleagues did at the time. I can give  
7 you the numbers to look up on the list, if it helps you,  
8 but were you aware that some of your colleagues that you  
9 overlapped with did have driving licences in their fake  
10 identities?
- 11 A. I -- I didn't know that, because when I was there,  
12 nobody had -- to my knowledge, had duff driving  
13 licences. I had nothing at all. Absolutely nothing.
- 14 Q. Right towards the end of your statement, you reference  
15 the fact you would have liked to have had some --
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. -- sort of false documentation?
- 18 A. I mean, it would have been a bit more professional to  
19 have had some documents at the time, to confirm your  
20 alter-ego, you know?
- 21 Q. In what circumstances would you have been able to  
22 produce them?
- 23 A. Well, I don't know, but it would have been better to  
24 have them than not to have them.
- 25 Q. Were you ever tested? Were you ever quizzed on your

1           identity?

2       A.   Yes.

3       Q.   In what circumstances?

4       A.   I can remember one occasion where -- I can't even

5           remember which group it was.  It was of no

6           consequence -- where they got hold of them and several

7           of them sat round me and gave me a very personal

8           face-to-face grilling, which I came out of all right.

9       Q.   Asking about details of your background, or suggesting

10       you were a policeman?

11      A.   They didn't know who I was.  And in those days, it

12       wasn't just the police who were doing that, there were

13       lots of other organisations doing the same thing.

14      Q.   Infiltrating groups?

15      A.   I don't know if they were infiltrating them.  Well, they

16       may have been.  But there were other people looking at

17       them, for whatever -- (overspeaking) --

18      Q.   And are you saying that that made people alert, and so

19       they would quiz -- they quizzed you?

20      A.   Well, most of the people that I've met were paranoid

21       about being infiltrated.  It was their whole being,

22       you know, wondering who was -- who was going to be

23       looking over their shoulders at them.

24      Q.   And how did you reassure them that you were

25       "Dave Robertson"?



- 1 A. Just -- just spoke to them, you know? Just -- I can't  
2 remember specifically, but I'm quite good at holding my  
3 own.
- 4 Q. Did you talk about the driving that you did at  
5 the garage?
- 6 A. Not a lot, no. I tried to keep away from that --
- 7 Q. Did you use to drive different vehicles in case anybody  
8 saw you?
- 9 A. I didn't -- I never drove a vehicle when I was on there.  
10 Never.
- 11 Q. Did any of your colleagues drive vehicles in their cover  
12 identities?
- 13 A. Not to my knowledge.
- 14 Q. Do you know what SDS cars would be used for then?  
15 The budget shows that there was a --
- 16 A. As far as I can remember, there were no cars.  
17 The office may have had a couple of cars, hire cars, but  
18 you -- you couldn't be driving around in a -- in a car  
19 in an undercover name and you risk getting stopped by  
20 police and having to produce your real name, you know?  
21 It just didn't work like that.
- 22 Q. And what would the office have been driving hire cars  
23 for?
- 24 A. I don't know. The office used to have a couple of hire  
25 cars. I don't know whether to get them home at night or

1           whatever, I don't really know. But they could never  
2           ever have gone public with that car, if they did have  
3           a car.

4       Q. You were ultimately tasked, when you were finally put  
5       into the field, to infiltrate -- or you did report on  
6       Maoist groups. Was that a specific targeting and  
7       tasking when you were given your role?

8       A. Yes.

9       Q. Why did you understand that that area of politics needed  
10      to be reported on?

11      A. Well, I didn't select it to be reported on, it was done  
12      for me. Obviously the research was done, I don't know,  
13      elsewhere, and they just felt these were the fields that  
14      they needed to look at.

15      Q. And was that -- was that tasking given at the level  
16      of -- if I use the names Phil Saunders and the cipher  
17      294; was it given at that level, or was it given at  
18      a higher level, when you were told what you had to do?

19      A. No, it was given at that level.

20      Q. That level.

21                 And were you told specifically what group meetings  
22      to start attending?

23      A. I can't recall. A lot was left to your own initiative  
24      and discretion. You know, they may have had some  
25      pointers from -- from the office.

1 MS WILKINSON: Sir, I'm conscious that we've got to the time  
2 of the scheduled break, but in light of the fact that  
3 we've had some other breaks, Sir, is it a matter as to  
4 whether we can check whether people are content to move  
5 on.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: I'm going to assume that the shorthand  
7 writers are content to continue, but we will have to  
8 have a break at a convenient time some time before  
9 the midday break.

10 MS WILKINSON: Thank you.

11 Can I just check then, is the next break 12 o'clock,  
12 unless we're told differently?

13 Well, then, HN45, one of the documents I'd like you  
14 to have a look at, just in terms of how much information  
15 you'd had before you were deployed, is this document,  
16 {UCPI/34339}, please.

17 Now, this is an exhibit that's been produced by  
18 a lady called Diane Langford, HN45. And she recalls you  
19 because she was part of a group, as we know, the Women's  
20 Liberation Front, also the Britain-Vietnam  
21 Solidarity Front and the Revolutionary  
22 Marxist-Leninist League. And she has this note amongst  
23 her records, and this was a document that you completed  
24 and supplied either to her or one of the others of  
25 the group. Do you remember this?

1 A. No, I don't remember that. I'm not even sure that's my  
2 writing or not.

3 Q. Well, it's certainly got your name correctly written,  
4 hasn't it, the cover name you were known as,  
5 "Dave Robertson"?

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. And it seems to have your address correct: flat 15 --

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. -- 287, West End Lane, NW6?

10 A. That's right, yes.

11 Q. And it's, when you are joining study classes, you're  
12 obviously asked what of this political background have  
13 you read; and there's a list there given of some,  
14 I understand, well known texts in this field.

15 A. Yeah, I mean, I -- I don't really remember this document  
16 at all. Not one bit.

17 Q. But it doesn't strike you as strange, does it, that you  
18 might have had to supply this sort of documentation?

19 A. No, it's quite possible --

20 Q. And when asked have you attended any Marxist-Leninist  
21 classes before, the answer is given there:  
22 "Yes, [at] 58 Lisburne Road [from] 1970 [onwards]."  
23 That was the address that was the home address of  
24 Mr Manchanda and his wife, Ms Langford; is that right?

25 A. Well, if that's what it says, you know, I have got no --

- 1 I can't remember what it was.
- 2 Q. Had you done quite a lot of reading on the topic area  
3 before you were deployed?
- 4 A. Again, I can't -- can't recall. I wouldn't have done  
5 a great deal of reading. I would have just done enough  
6 reading to get me by.
- 7 Q. So when you were, for example, quizzed as you gave us an  
8 example of before, and reassured people that you were  
9 "Dave Robertson" with your Scottish background,  
10 presumably this is what would help you support that?
- 11 A. Yeah.
- 12 Q. Some knowledge of this sort of text?
- 13 A. Yes, I suppose.
- 14 Q. And did you also give -- were you able to help with  
15 this sort of contextual knowledge about the political  
16 situation when HN348, cover first name "Sandra",  
17 deployed? She recalls you giving her some sort of  
18 introduction into the political field. Does that accord  
19 with you recollection?
- 20 A. I -- I may well have done, because -- because I would  
21 have been taking an interest in it so I could at least  
22 speak about it. Maybe not in depth, but to have some  
23 sort of knowledge of it.
- 24 Q. Did you understand what the reason for an infiltration  
25 into Maoist groups was in terms of their -- any threats

1 to public order or state security?

2 A. Well, I didn't make those decisions. They -- they came  
3 from somewhere else.

4 Q. Did you ever discuss it with any managers?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Were you ever given a definition of what "subversion"  
7 meant?

8 A. Well, I knew what it meant myself, but no.

9 Q. Were you ever told about what "extremism" meant?

10 A. Oh, I know what extremism is, yes. But it was just all  
11 part and parcel of the whole -- the whole package.

12 Q. Were you ever lectured or guided by your managers on  
13 the threats posed by the groups that you were  
14 infiltrating?

15 A. That I can't recall. I tend not to think -- no, and  
16 I don't -- can't really recall.

17 Q. Were you ever -- and this can be taken down now. Thank  
18 you.

19 Were you ever told what sort of intelligence to  
20 gather, what you needed to make a note of and recall to  
21 go in your handwritten notes?

22 A. No, that was left to your own initiative and discretion.

23 Q. Were you ever told what not to gather?

24 A. No.

25 Q. Or what you shouldn't be reporting?

1       A. I mean, if you reported it and it wasn't required, it  
2       was thrown away. But I -- I didn't -- it wasn't my  
3       decision as to what was relevant or wasn't, I just  
4       reported what I did and it was dealt with at a higher  
5       level.

6       Q. Can we have a look at an example of a report you  
7       submitted at the end of 1970, {UCPI/11738}, please.

8               Now, this is a group we heard about through  
9       a witness yesterday, Diane Langford, who said that  
10      the Revolutionary Marxist-Leninist League, which I think  
11      was the RMLL, in the left-hand corner there, was  
12      a relatively small group. Does that accord with your  
13      recollection?

14     A. I can't -- I can't recall what that group was all about.

15     Q. In this instance, the group is hosting a farewell party  
16      for some members of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam  
17      who had been visiting the UK. Do you recall attending  
18      this event?

19     A. No, I don't.

20     Q. And you report the timings of various speeches that had  
21      taken place. You report that, halfway down the second  
22      paragraph:

23               "Of those only about eight were from groups other  
24      than the RMLL, Britain-Vietnam Solidarity Front and  
25      the Women's Liberation Front. Manchanda openly

1           expressed disappointment at the small attendance."

2           A. Well, yes, if that's what I wrote, yes. But at many of  
3           those things, small attendance was the norm, rather than  
4           the -- you know, it was quite often that a lot of these  
5           things took place and the number of people who were  
6           there were sometimes of no relevance at all.

7           Q. Why did you need to report back how many numbers were  
8           there? Why was that important to Special Branch?

9           A. Well, it's just to let them know. Just to give somebody  
10          some assessment of what the group was all about.  
11          I mean, if they had 100 people there, it would be quite  
12          important. And by the same token, if they only had  
13          three people there, that would be important. It would  
14          give somebody the ability to make an assessment of what  
15          the group were about.

16          Q. And at the end of that third paragraph, we can see:

17                   "Following this ..."

18                   A gentleman called:

19                   "... Gajawan Bijur spoke and presented a bouquet of  
20          flowers. Finally, a young American named [privacy]  
21          presented a number of books of English folk-songs."

22                   Why did you need to report back about flowers and  
23          books being presented?

24          A. Because that's what happened.

25          Q. So your recollection is you would report back everything



1           that happened at a meeting?

2       A.   Yes.

3       Q.   And this would all appear in handwriting and then come

4           back to you fully typed up?

5       A.   That's right, yes.  I mean --

6       Q.   We saw earlier the example of the person whose

7           employment was sporadic and you'd been asked by Box 500

8           to get some information about that.  That was about

9           someone's personal job and the frequency of their

10          employment.  Were you ever told not to record certain

11          personal information?

12       A.   No.

13       Q.   So as far as you were concerned, everything was fair

14          game for reporting?

15       A.   Yes, and somebody else could sort out what was important

16          and what wasn't.

17       Q.   And the "somebody else" sorting it out would be after it

18          had been typed up?

19       A.   I -- I really don't know at what stage that would have

20          done.

21       Q.   All right.

22                 This report can be taken down now.  Thank you.

23                 You recall in your witness statement that you did

24                 have access to Special Branch records and about groups

25                 and people for the purposes of your work at the SDS.

1           What was that for?

2       A.   Well, it was just all part and parcel.  It might be

3           helpful to get a file up to have a read of it, to see

4           what could be gleaned, to see if what you were doing was

5           relevant or irrelevant.

6       Q.   And they would be the files about the people in

7           the groups that you were infiltrating?

8       A.   It just depends.  There were all kinds of files.

9       Q.   And where were they held?

10      A.   Well, they were all held in Special Branch.

11      Q.   So would you go back --

12      A.   No.

13      Q.   -- into the office to view these, or would they be

14           brought to your safe house?

15      A.   They would be brought to the safe house.

16      Q.   So you might say on one day, "Can you bring the file

17           about so and so, I need to have a quick look"?

18      A.   Yes, but that didn't happen very often.

19      Q.   But you had access to it if you needed it?

20      A.   Yes.

21      Q.   And presumably all your colleagues had the same access,

22           did they?

23      A.   Absolutely, yes.

24      Q.   Was that encouraged by management?

25      A.   It was just part of being a Special Branch person.

1 Q. The -- can I ask you to have a look at report  
2 {UCPI/1057}, please. This isn't that report. This is  
3 11738.

4 Could we please bring up report {UCPI/10567}.

5 It's tab 7, Sir, for your file. Thank you.

6 This was a meeting. We can look at the -- at  
7 page 3, it's got your cipher on it, if we need to  
8 {UCPI/10567/3}.

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Thank you.

11 But going back to page 1 {UCPI/10567/1}, we see that  
12 this was a meeting that had taken place at 58  
13 Lisburne Road in NW3, and 14 people were present. It  
14 was this group again, the Revolutionary  
15 Marxist-Leninist League.

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Three and a half hours in the home of Abhimanyu  
18 Manchanda and his then wife Diane Langford.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Were you given guidance about whether to attend meetings  
21 in people's homes?

22 A. No. Not that I recall.

23 Q. Was it encouraged?

24 A. No, nothing was encouraged. A lot was left to your own  
25 initiative, to go out there and do -- do what you could.

1           And I never went to anybody's home unless I was invited  
2           there. I never pushed myself to go there, because I had  
3           to have been asked to go there.

4       Q. So on the face of it, you must have been asked to attend  
5           this meeting. There were 14 people there.

6       A. Yes.

7       Q. And the object of this meeting, as we see at  
8           paragraph 3, was to "plan RMLL activities for 1971", and  
9           that would include reference to the Women's Liberation  
10          Front, the BVSF and the Friends of China.

11                Why had you been invited to help plan activities for  
12           the RMLL? Why had you been invited to attend?

13      A. Well, I don't really know.

14      Q. Had you already become quite a trusted member of  
15          the group by then?

16      A. Well, I think so. Otherwise they wouldn't have --  
17          wouldn't have asked.

18      Q. How had you -- how much time did you used to spend at  
19          their home? Once a week --

20      A. Only -- only as necessary.

21      Q. Did that look like once or twice a week, or once  
22          a month, something like that?

23      A. After 50 years, I've got no idea.

24      Q. You reference the fact that you recall you once babysat  
25          for the child that Mr Manchanda and Ms Langford had?

1       A. Yes, I did.

2       Q. And was that at their home address, as you recall it?

3       A. Well, it must have been.

4       Q. How did that come about?

5       A. Well, he just -- he just asked me on one occasion and

6       I -- I couldn't get out of it. They weren't away very

7       long. And to this day, I can't even remember seeing

8       the child. I think the child slept in a different room

9       and they were back fairly quickly, and that was it.

10      Q. Were you given any guidance about whether you should

11      become as close as this to the subjects that you were

12      reporting on, whether you should be left in charge of

13      a child?

14      A. No, it's just -- it just -- just happened.

15      Q. You developed a friendship as well with

16      a Mr Gajawan Bijur, didn't you?

17      A. Yes.

18      Q. And he ran a bookshop in Camden, the Banner bookshop?

19      A. That's right, yes.

20      Q. Can we pull up, please, report or memo {MPS/730516}.

21             This is tab 24, Sir, for your reference.

22             Now, this is a memo talking about Banner Books, and

23      it's effectively a strategy document for what was to be

24      done. It references at paragraph 1:

25             "'Banner Books', the well known left wing bookshop

1 has, since it was opened in 1968, become one of  
2 the principle outlets for the dissemination of official  
3 Peking-line literature ..."

4 And it's run, as we can see there, by Gajawan  
5 V Bijur, "a leading Maoist in his own right"?

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. There's reference at paragraph 3 to the fact that:

8 "Bijur has recently opened a second bookshop in  
9 Brixton to which he wishes to devote more of his time  
10 and is currently looking for a suitable 'comrade' to run  
11 the one at 90 Camden High Street."

12 And this is where, on the face of it, you come in,  
13 HN45, because at paragraph 4 it says:

14 "By coincidence, he has asked DC [HN45] of  
15 the Special Operations Squad to take it on, or to  
16 recommend a reliable substitute. (In the course of his  
17 penetration of Maoist groups, DC [HN45] is becoming  
18 a confidante of Bijur). Bijur would like the position  
19 filled by 14th February, 1972."

20 It goes on:

21 "Clearly it would be neither practical nor prudent  
22 for our officer to run the bookshop on a permanent basis  
23 but there are certain advantages in his offering to run  
24 it temporarily, say for about a fortnight."

25 Could we scroll down on the screen, please.

1           And this document sets out what those advantages  
2 would be:

3           "(i) It would entrench our officer in Bijur's esteem  
4 and probably make him acceptable in most Maoist circles.

5           "(ii) He would become privy to the inner workings  
6 and policy of 'Banner Books'.

7           "(iii) He would probably have access to records and  
8 mailing lists of persons of interest to Special Branch.

9           "(iv) He would be able to provide a plan of  
10 the bookshop and would have access to the keys of  
11 the premises."

12           Now, ultimately, you went to work at Banner Books  
13 for a while, didn't you?

14 A. Not really, no, but I just used to go there, I wasn't  
15 working.

16 Q. Would you help? If Mr Bijur wasn't there, would you  
17 help look after the shop in his absence?

18 A. No.

19 Q. So you were never there alone in the shop?

20 A. No.

21 Q. Did you ever have access to the records that  
22 the commander said that this would be an opportunity for  
23 you to --

24 A. No, I didn't.

25 Q. Did you ever have access to a plan of the bookshop?

1 A. Not to my knowledge, no.

2 Q. And what about the keys? Were you ever given keys to  
3 get in and out?

4 A. I can -- I can't recall. In fact, I don't think I ever  
5 had keys to the shop. I'm pretty certain I had no keys  
6 to the shop.

7 Q. So on the face of it then, this document, in terms of  
8 the opportunity this might present, didn't really come  
9 to fruition?

10 A. No, it didn't.

11 Q. Did you ever come to learn that there was a fire at  
12 Banner bookshop?

13 A. I can't recall that.

14 Q. Somebody apparently died in that fire. Does that -- do  
15 you recall that event at all?

16 A. No. If somebody had died in a fire at the bookshop,  
17 I would have remembered that for sure. And as far as  
18 I can recall, I was -- I didn't know there was any fire  
19 at the bookshop. Certainly not in my time.

20 Q. Can we have a look at a paragraph of your witness  
21 statement now, please, looking at the groups that you  
22 targeted and the nature of these groups.

23 If we have on screen, please, {MPS/741095} at  
24 page 8, please, {MPS/741095/8}. This is paragraph 29,  
25 the latter part of 29. So we're looking at the top of



1 the page, please.

2 You are listing here the groups that you were  
3 involved in. In fact, if we go to the previous page --  
4 forgive me, if we go to the previous page, we can just  
5 read that paragraph {MPS/741095/7}:

6 "Having looked through the documents that I have  
7 been shown, I recall some of the names of particular  
8 groups but I cannot remember details about them.  
9 I recall the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign, but this was  
10 an umbrella name for lots of groups. I also recall  
11 the Indo-China Solidarity Committee and the Communist  
12 Party of Great Britain (Marxist-Leninist)."

13 Then you say you also recall:

14 "... I may also have been involved with  
15 the Revolutionary Marxist-Leninist League,  
16 Friends of China, British-Vietnam Solidarity Front,  
17 the Marxist-Leninist Workers Association, the Hackney  
18 United Tenants Ad-Hoc Committee and Indo-China  
19 Solidarity Conference."

20 And you go on to explain that:

21 "... there was significant overlap between  
22 the attendees at meetings of these groups ..."

23 And you can tell from looking at the reports when  
24 you wrote your statement, in particular you see that:

25 "... Abhimanyu Manchanda and [privacy] played

1 central roles in many of them."

2 Was that your experience, that groups listed there  
3 were groups that had a common ethos, and therefore had  
4 a lot of shared membership?

5 A. Yes. The same people were just going round from group  
6 to group really.

7 Q. And would you therefore say that all of these groups had  
8 at their core a Maoist political leaning?

9 A. Yeah, pretty well, yes.

10 Q. And is that why you would have been part of, or  
11 reporting on, the Marxist-Leninist Workers Association  
12 and the Hackney United Tenants Ad-Hoc Committee?

13 A. I mean, there were so many various organisations at the  
14 time that it was difficult to keep up with all of them.  
15 The same people kept cropping up in them, some more than  
16 others. Some of these groups were just handfuls of  
17 people. And in their own way, a lot of them were of no  
18 relevance.

19 Q. And to those people, the same sort of people that you  
20 were seeing in these groups, they would obviously see  
21 you at the meetings and think you were just one of their  
22 group turning up at these various different meetings for  
23 these slightly varying causes?

24 A. That's right, yes. They were glad -- they were just  
25 glad that some people went along to the meeting.

1 Q. Can we have a look at report -- and we'll just have  
2 a look at a few example reports of you reporting on this  
3 broad umbrella group -- {UCPI/10254}, please. If  
4 I don't say it, it's always because there's five zeros  
5 beforehand. I apologise to the technicians.

6 This is tab 3, Sir.

7 This was, I think, the first meeting that we had --  
8 I think we looked at this briefly earlier on. This is  
9 an example of you reporting on the BVSF, and we can see  
10 there the names, Manchanda, Langford and Seedo.

11 How did you know this meeting was taking place?  
12 It's the first report that you -- that we have with your  
13 cipher attached at the bottom. How did you know to go  
14 along to this meeting at that time?

15 A. I mean, the date on that is October 1970, and I really  
16 have no idea, just looking at that. It is of -- I just  
17 can't even remember anything about that at this stage.  
18 It's such a long, long time ago.

19 Q. Had somebody done some research for you, perhaps, and  
20 told you that you should turn up? Or is that down to  
21 you to find out what to do on the ground?

22 A. Well, I may well have found out myself that the meeting  
23 was going on. I -- it is quite -- entirely possible.  
24 And I just can't -- can't really recall it --

25 Q. All right.

- 1 A. -- in any --
- 2 Q. The next report then -- tab 4 in your bundle, Sir -- and  
3 reference on the screen {UCPI/11737}, please. This is  
4 two or three weeks later. This is the RMLL. And we can  
5 see there, third line down, that it's just 12 people  
6 that are present.
- 7 A. Yes.
- 8 Q. And the chairman and only speaker was Mr Manchanda, and  
9 he delivered a long lecture. You were there for three  
10 hours. There was some discussion -- public discussion,  
11 and then various people gave their views. And you list  
12 the people that were present.
- 13 How had you come to know about this meeting going  
14 on?
- 15 A. I mean, again, the date on that is -- what is it? 1970?
- 16 Q. Yes.
- 17 A. I mean, I -- I really can't recall anything at all about  
18 this, and how I found out about it or didn't find out  
19 about it. It's very, very difficult to try and relate  
20 this to anything at this stage.
- 21 Q. To help jog your memory a little, if it does, we  
22 understand that the RMLL was a smaller group of people  
23 that really read into the subject matter and may have  
24 even operated as something of a steering committee for  
25 other groups, like the BVSF and like the Women's

1 Liberation Front. Does that accord with your  
2 recollection of what this group was about?

3 A. I have no recollection of what this group's about at all  
4 really. It's -- you know, I reported on lots of  
5 meetings and things, and they're just a blur now.

6 Q. All right.

7 A. And this means absolutely nothing to me.

8 Q. We'll persevere with another couple of reports, in case  
9 that helps your recollection.

10 {UCPI/21998}, please.

11 This is tab 8.

12 Here you are reporting on the Communist Party of  
13 Britain (Marxist-Leninist). How did that differ from  
14 the group that we've just seen a report about?

15 A. I really don't know. I mean, a lot of the same people  
16 flitted in and out of all these organisations.

17 Q. If we scroll down, we can see the people attending this  
18 meeting. Thank you.

19 Do we see the name there Gajawan Bijur?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Al Manchanda?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And just turning over the page, please, to page 2, at  
24 the top, {UCPI/21998/2}, Diane Langford and Sonia Seedo  
25 and Harpal Brar, which was a name we'd seen earlier in

1 the documents as well. Is that what you're referring to  
2 about the attendance of the same people  
3 -- (overspeaking) -- name is different?

4 A. I mean, I can't remember those people particularly, but  
5 I can remember the name Sonia -- is it Seedo? But  
6 I can't remember who or what she was. Alex Tudor-Hart,  
7 I recognise the name, but what -- in what relevance,  
8 I just can't recall this.

9 Q. And as far as the name "Al Manchanda" was concerned, how  
10 did you come to write the name "Al" instead of  
11 "Abimanyu"? Where did you pick that up from?

12 A. Because he was referred to as that.

13 Q. Who by?

14 A. I really don't know, but I just knew him as -- people  
15 called him "Al".

16 Q. People called him "Al".

17 Do you recall anybody calling him "Manu"?

18 A. Yes. Called all sorts of things. But I just can't be  
19 too specific about that. Call him "Al", "Manu",  
20 that's ...

21 Q. Can I deal with one other instance of this same sort of  
22 attendance of people but a very differently titled  
23 group.

24 Tab 10, Sir.

25 And on the screen {UCPI/10569}, please. This is

1 the Palestine Solidarity Campaign.

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. So, differently titled from those that we'd seen. But  
4 do we see at the bottom of the -- this first paragraph  
5 that at this annual conference, there is representation  
6 from two affiliated Maoist organisations, and there's  
7 the British Vietnam Solidarity Front referenced and  
8 the Communist Party -- the "G" appears to have been  
9 crossed out; was that a correction you might have made?

10 A. Where is that?

11 Q. On the penultimate line of paragraph 2. Does it seem  
12 a bit crossed out there? Perhaps it doesn't matter.

13 Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist); and  
14 the chairman was a man called Fawzi Ibrahim, a member of  
15 the executive committee. That name we've seen in other  
16 reports. Again, is that an example of the same sort of  
17 groups attending at all these meetings?

18 A. Yes, that name means absolutely nothing to me at this  
19 stage.

20 Q. Can we go on to page 3 of this report, please,  
21 {UCPI/10569/3}. Paragraph 10 we see there:

22 "The BVSF and [the Communist Party of Great Britain  
23 (Marxist-Leninist)] tried hard to assert their influence  
24 on [this group], the [Palestine Solidarity Campaign] but  
25 they were largely unsuccessful since neither

1           organisation is popular with the Arab members.  
2           Manchanda had attended the meeting in the express hope  
3           that he and his organisations might gain some control on  
4           the Executive Committee, but the only votes which he and  
5           [privacy] gained were from members of his group."

6           And we can see, if we scroll down the page, that  
7           name "Ibrahim", the name "Manchanda" and the name  
8           "Seedo"; and the name "Diane Langford", and indeed  
9           "Norman Temple"; do you remember him?

10          A. No. I mean, there weren't too many people there.

11          Q. Why were you reporting back about the influence or not  
12          that Manchanda had in this group?

13          A. Well, it just may well have been of interest to find out  
14          what people were doing, or, more importantly, what they  
15          weren't doing.

16          Q. Why was it valuable to find out what people weren't  
17          doing?

18          A. Well, that was not my decision, that's further up  
19          the line. But I just reported what I saw and heard and  
20          they could -- the senior management could make their own  
21          decisions on it.

22          Q. Next report, please. And this is a report of a meeting  
23          where a number of matters arise. So let's just have  
24          a look at this one in some detail, please. It's tab 14  
25          and the reference is {UCPI/11741}.



1           Now, this is a meeting of a group that we've seen  
2           already that you seem to report on regularly. And this  
3           was a meeting in March 1971, so you've been, on the face  
4           of it, reporting on these people and involved with them  
5           for some months by this point. Does that accord with  
6           your recollection?

7           A. Sorry, can you ...?

8           Q. By March 1971, you'd been in the field a number of  
9           months reporting on this group. That sounds right,  
10          doesn't it, from the reports?

11          A. Yes, it would have -- yes.

12          Q. And you here are at a home address, we can see from  
13          paragraph 2. This is a meeting on a Saturday, 13 March,  
14          at the home address of "[Privacy]". And this appears to  
15          have been an extraordinary meeting; and it appears to  
16          have lasted from 1.30 in the afternoon to 10.30 at  
17          night.

18          A. That was on a Saturday.

19          Q. Yes. So it was a long meeting. Do you remember it?

20          A. I don't -- I can't recall very much about this meeting  
21          except, as a bit of light relief, somebody played  
22          the guitar and set Chairman Mao's speech "Take not  
23          a needle and a thread from the masses", and that was  
24          sang to the group. And that's about the size of it.

25          Q. So you remember that interlude, as it were, in

1 the course of this long meeting --

2 A. I remember the guitar player.

3 Q. So you remember that there was this meeting then to be  
4 able to recall that? You've noted here that it was  
5 attended by 17 people?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Your cipher again appears at the end of the report. So  
8 do we understand, if it's got your cipher on it, you --

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. -- were present and you were the person supplying this  
11 information?

12 A. The reason that I remember this meeting is because it  
13 was on a Saturday, and it was a -- during the day. And  
14 they tried to get as many people to attend these things  
15 to -- so they could discuss all sorts of things. And  
16 that's why I remember that one in particular, because it  
17 was a Saturday.

18 Q. And so that was unusual?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. And indeed, it says it was "an extraordinary meeting"  
21 that had obviously been called for a purpose.

22 We see at paragraph 3 your note of the purpose of  
23 the meeting was -- and you quote there:

24 "... 'to cut down to size' the organisation's  
25 leading personality A Manchanda ..."

1           And you there note:

2           "... whose offensive manner, dogmatic attitude,  
3           bullying techniques and general inefficiency have become  
4           too much for even his admirers to swallow."

5           Where was that language coming from, HN --

6       A. I mean, I would have picked that in amongst the group,  
7           it's as simple as that.

8       Q. Picked up what?

9       A. Pardon?

10      Q. What would you have picked up from the group?

11      A. Picked up what the object of the meeting was.

12      Q. Did you not know about it in advance?

13      A. I -- I can't recall what I knew in advance or not.

14           Again, we're 1971.

15      Q. And what about this phrase to "cut down to size"? Where  
16           had that phrase come from?

17      A. Don't know.

18      Q. And then the description of Mr Manchanda's behaviour and  
19           attitude, where had that come from?

20      A. Again, I don't know. There was a lot of in-fighting  
21           amongst themselves that I took no part in.

22      Q. How did you consider his manner? Did you consider his  
23           manner to be offensive and his attitude dogmatic  
24           yourself?

25      A. I didn't -- I didn't really think anything about him at

1 all.

2 Q. And so these descriptive words and adjectives aren't  
3 yours; you think you're here reporting the views of  
4 certain people in the group?

5 A. Yes, I mean, I didn't really get deeply personal with  
6 any of those people, I just picked up what I -- I found  
7 from people at the thing, and just dealt with it and  
8 reported it, and tried to put it into some semblance of  
9 order.

10 Q. The --

11 "Initially, Mr Manchanda [was to take] ... the chair  
12 but because of the nature of the business to be  
13 discussed it was decided that he should vacate  
14 the chair, and [so somebody else was] ... elected [for]  
15 chairman ... [of] the meeting."

16 It appears that what then took place is that people  
17 gave speeches or discussions and delivered positions  
18 from documents that they had prepared in advance, and  
19 that they read from documents for some time. Do you  
20 recall being asked to prepare something in advance of  
21 the meeting?

22 A. Absolutely not.

23 Q. Did you turn up with any documentation?

24 A. I -- I wouldn't have done that for anybody.

25 Q. When you realised what this meeting was designed for,

1           some form of attack and almost to depose the leader, did  
2           you think about leaving?

3           A. No. No, I didn't. I just reported things as they were.  
4           I didn't really go into an in-depth analysis of who was  
5           saying what to who and why, and why people were arguing.  
6           I just was able to stand back and take a dispassionate  
7           view about the whole thing.

8           Q. Did it become obvious that there was going to have to be  
9           a vote and you were going to have to take sides?

10          A. I don't know --

11          Q. Did you think about leaving at that stage?

12          A. Pardon?

13          Q. Did you think about leaving the meeting at that stage,  
14          where you were going to have to take sides or influence  
15          a vote in this meeting?

16          A. To be totally honest, I've got no real recollection of  
17          that. You know, the -- the minutiae, the detail of it,  
18          I just cannot recall it after all this time.

19          Q. Paragraph 6 of this report, page 1 again, please,  
20          {UCPI/11741/1} -- just bring that back up on screen.

21          Thank you. Can you just scroll down. Thank you.

22                 You write there:

23                 "Manchanda, in his defence, launched into  
24                 a characteristic diatribe ...."

25                 Was that your choice of phrase there, HN45?

1 A. Well, I would think so, yes.

2 Q. "... against certain members of the RMLL, particularly  
3 [Privacy and Privacy] and spoke for two hours, mainly  
4 spent in reading from a prepared statement ..."

5 It goes on:

6 "The nub of his defence ..."

7 And the use of the word "defence" there suggests he  
8 was very much under attack. Was that the impression you  
9 got at the meeting?

10 A. If that's what I said there, yes, it must have been at  
11 the time. But again, I just can't remember the -- all  
12 the detail of this sort of thing. I just reported it at  
13 the time while things were still fresh in my head.  
14 I got out and would have made notes at the time,  
15 you know, away from that.

16 But I never really went in and analysed things to  
17 any great depth.

18 Q. "The nub of his defence [he says] was that he had  
19 nothing to answer; everything had been done in  
20 the interests of the organisation and the working  
21 class."

22 You note however that he felt he had to plead ILO  
23 health in dealing with the accusations during this  
24 meeting, that he produced his diabetics card, that he  
25 referred to the recent birth of his daughter, and you

1 note there that his supporters -- this is about fine  
2 lines up:

3 "... his supporters agree that a proper pride in  
4 one's off spring it understandable, they consider that  
5 Manchanda's constant stream of [Privacy] anecdotes is  
6 insufferable."

7 Again, is this a view you held?

8 A. I just made my own analysis of it and wrote it down.

9 Q. And was this your analysis, that his anecdotes were  
10 insufferable?

11 A. Well, yes. I mean, I didn't really get involved too  
12 much to the extent, but I had to make some sort of  
13 analysis.

14 Q. It goes on:

15 "They are not really convinced either that his claim  
16 of sending his wife to work while he stays at home is  
17 a 'practical example of Women's Liberation', is entirely  
18 virtuous."

19 What did you think, that he was staying home looking  
20 after their daughter while Ms Langford went out to work?

21 A. I don't know. I really don't. I can't recall that at  
22 all (inaudible).

23 Q. Paragraph 7 on the next page, please.:

24 "There then followed a general discussion with  
25 [Privacy] speaking in Manchanda's defence. [Privacy]

1 read a copy of a letter she had previously sent to  
2 Manchanda making a very personal attack on the private  
3 morals of [Privacy] arising from an incident that had  
4 taken place some time previously. This reduced  
5 [Privacy] to tears."

6 Do you remember what that was about?

7 A. No.

8 Q. Can I suggest something to you. Might it have been  
9 about an allegation that a female in the group had been  
10 the subject of attempted rape by a male in the group?

11 A. I know nothing of that --

12 Q. And that she had written about that in a letter to  
13 Mr Manchanda and that that's what was being raised and  
14 caused another person in the group to be reduced to  
15 tears and that's your reference there?

16 A. Yeah, I -- I have no -- if -- if the subject of rape had  
17 come up, I would have picked up on that. But obviously  
18 it didn't, to me.

19 Q. Can you rule out that that's what this matter was about,  
20 50 years later?

21 A. Well, that's just conjecture. I can't say.

22 Q. What was the -- what was the very personal attack on  
23 private morals about?

24 A. Again, I don't know. It's been such a long, long time  
25 ago --



- 1 Q. Can you remember why somebody was reduced to tears? You  
2 remember the music being played --
- 3 A. No.
- 4 Q. -- this person was obviously upset.
- 5 A. I can't recall any of this to any great extent.
- 6 Q. Paragraph 11, please. {UCPI/11741/2}:  
7 "The informant's personal view ..."  
8 That's you, isn't it, HN45? You're the informant in  
9 this report?
- 10 A. Yeah.
- 11 Q. "... is that whether or not Manchanda is expelled  
12 the damage to the RMLL is irreparable. Apart from  
13 Manchanda there is no one with sufficient personality to  
14 hold the organisation together and if his critics lose  
15 the [Privacy] day they have said too much for him to  
16 suffer their continued presence."
- 17 A. Yes, I -- that's my -- that must have been my view at  
18 the time, and I have no -- no problem with that.
- 19 Q. Do you remember ultimately that there was a vote to ask  
20 Mr Manchanda and indeed Diane Langford to withdraw from  
21 this group?
- 22 A. No, I can't -- can't recall that.
- 23 Q. Do you remember voting?
- 24 A. No, I didn't vote at anything.
- 25 Q. You never voted?

1 A. No.

2 Q. In any of these meetings?

3 A. No. I avoided that sort of thing.

4 Q. How did you avoid it in a group of --

5 A. Just didn't do it.

6 Q. -- 14 people?

7 A. For whatever reason, I didn't vote on anything.

8 Q. Would you constantly abstain?

9 A. Pardon?

10 Q. Would you constantly abstain then when votes took place?

11 A. I don't -- I really don't know. I mean, this is going

12 back so long that I just can't place these events in any

13 sequential order or what I did do or didn't do -- or

14 what I did do or didn't do. But I didn't really get

15 involved in these things, because it wasn't my place to

16 do that.

17 Q. Your place because you weren't a true member of

18 the group, you were just an undercover officer?

19 A. That's right.

20 Q. Do you remember whether your colleagues used to vote in

21 meetings?

22 A. Don't know.

23 MS WILKINSON: I'll come back to that. I think we're just

24 going to have a very short break -- oh, in fact, no,

25 it's a proper break now, I do apologise. It's

1           12 o'clock now and it's breakdown now, so we'll pick up  
2           again after the lunch break, if that's okay.

3           THE CHAIRMAN: Ms Wilkinson, roughly how much longer have  
4           you got?

5           MS WILKINSON: I have probably half an hour, 20 to 30  
6           minutes.

7           THE CHAIRMAN: So we should then finish by not too long  
8           after 1 o'clock?

9           MS WILKINSON: Yes.

10          THE CHAIRMAN: Allowing for ten minute gap at the end?

11          MS WILKINSON: Yes, correct.

12          THE CHAIRMAN: HN45, we have a quarter of an hour break now.

13                 Are you content to continue until shortly after  
14                 1 o'clock to finish your evidence or would you prefer us  
15                 to stop at 1 and then start again at 2?

16          A. No, I have no problems. I will go to the end.

17          THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Quarter of an hour's break.

18          A. Sir.

19          MR FERNANDES: Good afternoon, everyone. We will now take  
20                 a break. May I remind those in the virtual hearing room  
21                 to remember to join your break-out rooms, please.

22                 The time is now 12.05 pm, so we shall reconvene at  
23                 12.20 pm. Thank you.

24          (12.05 pm)

25                                 (A short break)

1 (12.20 pm)

2 MR FERNANDES: Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome back.

3 I will now hand over to the Chairman to continue  
4 proceedings.

5 Chairman.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

7 Ms Wilkinson.

8 MS WILKINSON: Thank you, Sir.

9 Could I ask us please to look at a paragraph from  
10 your witness statement, HN45. This is reference  
11 {MPS/741095} at page 13, please {MPS/741095/13}. I'll  
12 give that reference again, in case it assists  
13 {MPS/741095/13}. Thank you very much.

14 I'm looking at paragraph 53. We just heard you  
15 reporting on the internal division within the RMLL and  
16 Mr Manchanda's ultimate suspension from the group and  
17 your analysis of that passed back to Special Branch,  
18 HN45.

19 Here at your statement, you say this:

20 "I have been asked whether my supervisors concluded  
21 that I no longer needed to report on  
22 the Revolutionary Marxist-Leninist League ... after  
23 the group was damaged irreparably by a loss of faith in  
24 Manchanda's leadership. I have no memory of my  
25 supervisors' response to this but the documents indicate

1 that I continued to report on their activities and  
2 the group subsequently changed its name. I only did  
3 what I was asked to do so I'm sure that I was still  
4 required to report on them. If my supervisors did not  
5 want me to go to these meetings, they would have said so  
6 and there would have been discussion that reports on  
7 this group were no longer required."

8 Moving on the to the next page, please,  
9 {MPS/741095/14}:

10 "I do not know why they would still have wanted  
11 information about the RMLL after Manchanda left but they  
12 must have felt it still contained people of interest.

13 "I can see from the documents that the RMLL  
14 re-furled under [Privacy]'s leadership. I cannot  
15 remember what view I formed on the risk of subversion  
16 under [Privacy]'s leadership and whether I expressed  
17 this to my supervisors. With the benefit of hindsight,  
18 I'm not convinced that the group posed a threat of  
19 subversion or revolution under either [Privacy] or  
20 Manchanda's leadership given how low the membership was  
21 but I suspect this may not have been appreciated at the  
22 time."

23 Can I also just highlight two other aspects of your  
24 witness statement. I don't need them to be brought up  
25 on screen. At paragraph 68 you say you can't recall

1           seeing any Maoist committing public disorder whilst you  
2           were deployed but may have just forgotten over  
3           the years".

4           At paragraph 69 you say that your recollection is  
5           that the Maoists were generally not violent.

6           That overview of those extracts from your witness  
7           statement, HN45 -- and that can come down now, thank  
8           you, the statement -- that overview suggests, in  
9           accordance with your analysis in that report we saw,  
10          that you weren't convinced that you needed to keep  
11          reporting back about these groups. Did you have  
12          a discussion with your managers saying, "Is there  
13          something else I should do; why do I need to keep  
14          reporting about this group"?

15         A. I can't recall that. In -- in those days, when you're  
16          of a lower rank, it's not -- not your remit to question  
17          your managers.

18          .

19         Q. Did you feel that your time every day for weeks and  
20          weeks was being well used whilst you were reporting on  
21          this group, this fragmented group that posed no threat?

22         A. I mean, I didn't analyse things like that. I was just  
23          -- it was just part of the job that I was doing at the  
24          time. It was as if I was on any other department in  
25          Special Branch. It was just the same sort of thing and

1 I carried on doing it until I was told to stop.

2 Q. Can I just ask you a little more about -- we saw in that  
3 earlier report the language that you used in reporting  
4 back about Manchanda's demise in that group. Can I ask  
5 you just to have a look at another report.

6 Behind tab 13, Sir, in your bundle.

7 And on the screen, please, with the following  
8 reference {MPS/739236}. This is a report where you are  
9 solely reporting back information about the private  
10 circumstances of Mr Manchanda and Ms Langford, and you  
11 refer to the fact that, at paragraph 2, Mr Manchanda:

12 "... now considers the position to be a full time  
13 one and has awarded himself a small weekly payment out  
14 of the organisation's funds. It is believed to be in  
15 the region of £3 or £4. His wife, Diane Langford, works  
16 full time as a temporary typist through the Argyll  
17 Staff Bureau, 18 Tottenham Court Road.

18 "Manchanda considers that this is a practical  
19 experiment in the field of Women's Liberation as he  
20 remains at home to look after their young baby, born in  
21 [Privacy] 1970, while his wife is out working."

22 Did you consider that it was appropriate to report  
23 this amount of personal detail about their lives?

24 A. I just reported what -- the information that I gleaned.  
25 It was down to somebody else to either write it or scrap

1           it.

2           Q. Did you consider that you were writing -- that there was  
3           an element here, and looking perhaps back with  
4           the benefit of hindsight, an element of sexism by  
5           depicting this as a decision that Manchanda had made, to  
6           accepted his wife out to work as a practical experiment,  
7           rather than it being a decision all of Ms Langford's own  
8           making?

9           A. I really have no comment to make on that. I mean --

10          Q. No comment on whether there was a sexist bias to this  
11          report?

12          A. I mean, bringing sexism into -- which is a very bland  
13          ordinary report, I just have no opinion on that, and  
14          I don't think it is simply.

15          Q. Do you -- and I will find, yes, the reference.

16                 Could I just ask to have up on screen report  
17                 {UCPI/21998}, please.

18                 This is behind tab 8.

19                 If we just have a look at paragraph 5, please.

20                 This is a meeting where you referenced that:

21                 "The meeting was ... attended by members of the Post  
22                 Office Workers Union who ... [had] appealed for some  
23                 money and there was a collection at the end of  
24                 the meeting and you said this:

25                 "Most of the Post Office workers were coloured and



1 from time to time gave the clenched fist 'black Power'  
2 salute. They may also have been responsible ...(Reading  
3 to the words)... fight ahead."

4 Again, with the benefit of hindsight, looking back,  
5 do you recall that you were being asked to include  
6 details about people's race in reports.

7 A. That didn't come into it. I just reported it as it was  
8 at the time.

9 Q. And why did you need to report that the Post Office  
10 workers were "coloured"?

11 A. I don't know. I just did, you know, because they were,  
12 and it was unusual to have people from that union,  
13 the Post Office Workers Union. I'd never come across  
14 them before and I just reported it as it was.

15 Q. Do you recall ever having training at that stage as to  
16 how to react or have any type of race training as to  
17 what was appropriate and what was not appropriate to  
18 note about people?

19 A. Race -- race wasn't a problem in my day, and there was  
20 no training whatsoever. I never -- I've never heard it  
21 mentioned until now.

22 Q. And in what way was race not a problem in your day?

23 A. Well, I don't think it was a problem. That's my  
24 personal opinion.

25 Q. Can I now move on to the ultimate conclusion of your

1 deployment, and this report can come down now.

2 Can we have up instead report -- I'll get  
3 the reference -- behind tab 34 with the reference  
4 {UCPI/16247}.

5 Now, there came a time when your deployment ended  
6 unexpectedly, didn't it, HN45?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. And I think you initially thought that might have been  
9 in December 1973, but as we look at this report, you  
10 recall it was an incident that took place at a meeting  
11 at the LSE, the London School of Economics?

12 A. That's right, yes.

13 Q. And this building here that you were referring to  
14 the meeting taking place, the Clare Market Building,  
15 Houghton Street, that was part of the LSE, wasn't it?

16 A. It was. I can't remember exactly, but it was part of  
17 the LSE. It was up a flight of stairs.

18 Q. If we look at the second page of this report, please.  
19 {UCPI/16247/2}. I'll just bring it up myself.

20 This was a report -- in fact, next page -- forgive  
21 me -- page 3 {UCPI/16247/3}.

22 This was a report at the bottom we can see your  
23 cipher and that of Jill Mosdell's name appears at  
24 the bottom of this report.

25 A. I mean --

1 Q. If we could just scroll a little bit further down  
2 the page, just to help you, HN45, and then I'll ask  
3 about it. I think page 3 then.

4 A. Are you saying this is a time when I had the trouble?

5 Q. Yes, and do you know what, I may --

6 A. That's -- that's not the same time at all.

7 Q. Well, I'm just trying to help you with the timing, and  
8 I think I've got the right report. 16247 in the bottom  
9 right-hand corner, yes. {UCPI/16247/2}.

10 What I'm trying to help with is the people who were  
11 present and who you were with that day. So it is on  
12 page 2 that we see your cipher and the name  
13 Jill Mosdell.

14 Thank you very much for the technicians for bringing  
15 that up. Thank you.

16 And we can see there you're present at this meeting,  
17 HN45, and there's Jill Mosdell's name appears with you.  
18 Can you see also in that body of paragraph 12 the other  
19 following persons present at the meeting there's  
20 Mr Manchanda, Ms Langford and then there's somebody  
21 called Ethel and the surname's not being mentioned for  
22 privacy reasons?

23 A. Well, at -- at the time that that incident happened with  
24 me, I didn't report on anything and Jill Mosdell wasn't  
25 there. I walked up into the meeting room up the stairs

1           and that's had I came face-to-face with Ethel and  
2           I left. I never attended any meeting like that and  
3           I didn't put a report in, and --

4       Q. Right?

5       A. -- Jill Mosdell wasn't there.

6       Q. So what we're about to deal with is the event of your  
7           compromise and ultimately your withdrawal from  
8           the field.

9           Now, you recall that that may have been in  
10          December 1973, but after this report in February, which  
11          is the only report that bears the name Ethel here, there  
12          don't appear to be any further reports from you  
13          reporting on these groups, which might mean that this  
14          was the occasion when your deployment came to an end.  
15          Does that help with your recollection? Can you  
16          positively rule it out?

17       A. When my deployment came to an end I was there on my own.  
18          I hadn't done anything. I just walked into the place  
19          and then that incident happened, and I walked out of  
20          the place, no reports done, nothing at all, you know, so  
21          this can't be the same time.

22       Q. Might Jill Mosdell have stayed and continued writing  
23          into the --

24       A. (inaudible) she wasn't there --

25       Q. Right, well, let's deal with your recollection.

1           On the event of the ultimate compromise, you went  
2           into a meeting that you recall taking place at the LSE.  
3           Was it an evening meeting or a daytime meeting?

4           A. No, evening, I think.

5           Q. It was evening.

6           And had you gone there with any colleagues?

7           A. No.

8           Q. What was the group that you were reporting on or  
9           expecting to report on that day?

10          A. I can't remember. I can't remember at this time. It  
11          was quite a big meeting and I just went along and I --  
12          I can remember going into that place, going up some  
13          stairs and walk into this big room when I saw Ethel, and  
14          that's when that happened, and I turned round, went out,  
15          down the stairs and I walked at high speed away from  
16          there for about ten minutes. And there was no -- that  
17          I can recall, no reporting, no anything, because  
18          I didn't have time to do it.

19          Q. You refer to a lady called Ethel. Having reflected on  
20          all the documentation that has been ultimately provided  
21          to you, do you now recall that you knew Ethel was Irish?

22          A. I -- I can't really recall. I didn't know her second  
23          name. I had only met her once.

24          Q. Just limiting it to the question that I'm trying to ask  
25          from you. Do you remember that she was Irish?

1 A. I can't recall that.

2 Q. And you saw her there. Did she recognise you first or  
3 did you recognise her first?

4 A. She looked at me and --

5 Q. -- (overspeaking) --

6 A. -- (inaudible).

7 Q. What did she say?

8 A. You know what she said?

9 Q. Tell us.

10 A. "Here's Scotland Yard come to take us away". Her exact  
11 words, in quite a loud voice.

12 Q. And you were not with anybody but there were other  
13 people present at the meeting?

14 A. Well, the place was full of people.

15 Q. How many people there?

16 A. I don't know. A lot.

17 Q. And she said in a loud voice, "Here's Scotland Yard come  
18 to take us away"?

19 A. Yes, something like that, or very close to it.

20 Q. You must have panicked?

21 A. I don't panic, I just take steps to ameliorate  
22 the situation.

23 Q. And what step did you take?

24 A. I went up to Ethel and I pretended to give her a hug and  
25 I whispered in her ear and I said -- I can't remember

1 exactly what I said to her. I said, "I'm getting out of  
2 here now, say as little as you can about me", and left  
3 her and went down the stairs at high speed.

4 Q. Did you say you pretended to take her hand?

5 A. I didn't take her hand.

6 Q. Oh, sorry. You went up to her and what did you say?

7 A. I whispered in her here --

8 Q. -- (overspeaking) --

9 A. -- pretended to give her a kind of a hug and I whispered  
10 in her ear, "Just -- just say nothing".

11 Q. And how did she react when she'd just been shouting that  
12 you were from Scotland Yard, did she let you approach  
13 her and whisper?

14 A. Of course she did, yes. And off she went.

15 Q. And off she went or off you went?

16 A. And off I went, you know?

17 Q. And what did she do.

18 A. I've no idea because I was going down the stairs.

19 Q. Did she shout, "Scotland Yard are whispering to me to  
20 tell me to be quiet"?

21 A. She didn't shout anything.

22 Q. And you left and walked away?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. You reported the incident straight away, did you?

25 A. I did, yes.

1 Q. Who to? Just -- as far as you need to give the cipher  
2 key, was it one of your closer managers?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. The direct rank above you?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. There is -- at that level we know there was  
7 a Phil Saunders and an HN294. Was it one of those two?

8 A. It would have been Phil Saunders, as I remember.

9 Q. I think in your statement you reference the fact that  
10 you called him at home to tell him what had happened.

11 A. It may well have been, yes.

12 Q. And so you must have had his home phone number at that  
13 point?

14 A. Probably.

15 Q. And what did he say that you should do at that point?

16 A. That I -- I can't recall. It was all -- I -- I just  
17 went home and it was all taken up in the morning.

18 Q. So sorry, I can't hear very clearly. You went home and  
19 it was all taken up in the morning, did you say?

20 A. In the morning, yes, and it was agreed that my  
21 deployment finished there and then.

22 Q. Well, you help us with a little more detail in your  
23 statement there by saying that the next day, the Head of  
24 Special Branch, Vic Gilbert, and the deputy  
25 commissioner, Roland Watts, came to speak to you.



1           They're very senior officers, aren't they?

2           A.   Yes.

3           Q.   So this must have been quite an unusual event?

4           A.   It was.

5           Q.   They came to explain that they had a master plan and  
6           that if I was ever confronted about being UCO, I should  
7           say that I was acting completely off my own bat and that  
8           my superior officers were unaware of what I was doing."

9           You say at paragraph 86:

10           "I was livid that they refused to take  
11           responsibility and walk away from them both."

12           And you recall that Phil Saunders wasn't there at  
13           that meeting?

14           A.   That's right. I mean --

15           Q.   Was the suggestion, if you were confronted by activists  
16           and you carried on being deployed, you should say it  
17           wasn't down to your superior officers, or was this if  
18           anyone in Special Branch spoke to you?

19           A.   It was them covering their own tracks, that's what --

20           Q.   -- (overspeaking) --

21           A.   -- (inaudible).

22           Q.   Covering their own tracks within the police force, or if  
23           you were confronted by activists?

24           A.   -- (overspeaking) -- Special Branch, because Vic Gilbert  
25           was the Deputy Assistant Commissioner of Special Branch

1           and Roland Watts was a Commander Operations, I think he  
2           was, and they were there to row themselves out of  
3           anything having to do with it. And I took that -- I was  
4           very upset that that was -- when a little bit of support  
5           was needed, it was not there.

6           Q. So if you were quizzed about this by anybody in  
7           the broader police force, you were to make sure that --  
8           you had to take responsibility and not get your senior  
9           officers into trouble?

10          A. Yes, that's what -- that's all it was.

11          Q. If Phil Saunders had been there, do you think he might  
12          have stepped in and said anything at this suggestion?

13          A. Phil Saunders was a gentleman and he would have dealt  
14          with it appropriately. There wasn't a bad side to  
15          Phil Saunders.

16          Q. Did he persuade you -- did he try to persuade you to  
17          stay within the SDS and to continue the work?

18          A. I couldn't have stayed within the SDS.

19          Q. And so you considered that this was definitely  
20          unsatisfactory and it was your decision, effectively, to  
21          withdraw from your deployment?

22          A. I think, for all reasons, I couldn't have stayed in  
23          the SDS, because when Ethel went away, she was an  
24          unknown quantity; I didn't know what she was going to  
25          say or not say. But I never heard any more about it.

1 Q. Do you recall that two other undercover officers were  
2 withdrawn as well as a precaution: HN348 and  
3 Jill Mosdell?

4 A. I can't remember that, but yes, I would agree with that.

5 Q. Was this viewed as a failure within the SDS, this  
6 compromise?

7 A. No, it was not a failure, it was just circumstances --

8 Q. So, it wasn't detrimental to your career or your  
9 prospects at all as a police officer?

10 A. It was not. It was just circumstances that were totally  
11 beyond your control.

12 Q. You ultimately, I think -- and we'll hear at a later  
13 stage in the Inquiry -- came back to work in an  
14 administrative capacity between 1982 and 1985 within  
15 the SDS; is that right?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. And at the conclusion of your deployment you didn't have  
18 any rest time after this incident, you didn't feel  
19 affected by your work and you went to work elsewhere in  
20 the police force?

21 A. That's right, yes.

22 MS WILKINSON: Thank you very much, HN84. I don't have any  
23 further questions for you at this stage, but there is  
24 a process that we need to follow to check whether  
25 anybody else who's been listening to your evidence wants

1 to address anything that's arisen out of it. So if we  
2 just wait there, there will be a pause now.

3 A. Thank you.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: I have two questions before we have our  
5 pause.

6 The "duff" accommodation you had. Can you describe  
7 it in general terms, size, whether it was -- which floor  
8 it was on, that sort of thing?

9 A. It -- it was part of a terraced house in West End Lane  
10 that was let into rooms. It was a filthy rooming house  
11 run by a large Irish lady and it was poorly furnished.  
12 It cost me somewhere in the region of 3 or £4 a week.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: It was a room?

14 A. Just a room, yes, sir.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Separate topic now. When your deployment  
16 ended in the circumstances you've described, did you  
17 speak to Ethel yourself after you'd met her on  
18 the stairs, whether that day or later?

19 A. After that incident, I never saw her again.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. As I explained before, there's  
21 now going to be a ten-minute break and anybody who's  
22 been following the proceedings who is a core participant  
23 has any question that they wish Ms Wilkinson to raise,  
24 she will raise it with you after the ten minutes have  
25 gone. Would you be prepared to come back in

1 ten minutes?

2 A. Thank you, Sir.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

4 MR FERNANDES: Good afternoon, everyone. We will now take  
5 a ten-minute break. May I remind those in the virtual  
6 hearing room to remember to join your break-out rooms.  
7 The time is 12.45 pm, so we shall resume at 12.55 pm.  
8 Thank you.

9 (12.46 pm)

10 (A short break)

11 (1.08 pm)

12 MR FERNANDES: Good afternoon, everyone. Welcome back and  
13 thank you for your patience. I will now hand over to  
14 the Chairman to continue proceedings.  
15 Chairman.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

17 HN45, there are now two further questions that are  
18 going to be asked of you by Ms Wilkinson. Before she  
19 asks you those questions, may I say something to  
20 the wider audience. I heard the evidence on  
21 the incident which caused HN45 to end his deployment  
22 with one significant exception, I had not yet received  
23 from Diane Langford the extract from her dissertation  
24 that she was going to send to me.

25 Ms Wilkinson.

1 MS WILKINSON: May I just deal with two matters, HN45. You  
2 referenced the fact that there was a stage where you  
3 were quizzed and you had to reassure people that you  
4 were "Dave Robertson" and gave some background to  
5 withstand the scrutiny that you were put under at that  
6 stage, and I think you said that that had come about  
7 because the people in the groups that you were mixing  
8 with were quite paranoid at that stage; is that right?

9 A. Yes, they were, in their own way.

10 Q. And I think you said they were paranoid about being  
11 infiltrated generally and being infiltrated by others.  
12 Who did they think they were being infiltrated by?

13 A. They didn't really know. I think they felt they were  
14 being infiltrated by everybody.

15 Q. And who might that have included, from your  
16 understanding of what they thought?

17 A. Well, just police, Security Services, other groups,  
18 anything.

19 Q. Other groups, other activist groups?

20 A. Yes, yes.

21 Q. The final question is this: were you aware -- your cover  
22 accommodation was in West End Lane.

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. That you've told us about. Are you aware of any other  
25 police estate nearby at that stage in the 70s?

1 A. No.

2 MS WILKINSON: No, all right. Thank you. Those are all  
3 the questions that I have to ask.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

5 Thank you, HN45. I'm sorry that your evidence took  
6 a little longer with rather more breaks than I'd  
7 anticipated, but that is now an end of your evidence.  
8 Thank you for giving it.

9 A. Thank you, Sir.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: We will now break because of time is just  
11 after 10 past, we will break until 2.10.

12 MS KAUFMANN: Sir, just before we do break, I just wonder,  
13 I had indicated to Ms Wilkinson that I wanted to ask  
14 you, Sir, for some clarification in relation to --

15 THE CHAIRMAN: I am not here to answer your questions.

16 MR FERNANDES: We will now take a break for lunch.

17 The hearing will resume at 2.10 pm. Thank you.

18 (1.11 pm)

19 (The short adjournment)

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